DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 439 324 CG 029 892

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TITLE	Pastoral Care in Assumption College: Its Concept and Practice.
PUB DATE	1997-05-00
NOTE	6p.; In: Caring in an Age of Technology. Proceedings of the International Conference on Counseling in the 21st Century (6th, Beijing, China, May 29-30, 1997); see CG 029 879.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Counseling; *Counseling Services; Foreign Countries; Individual Needs
IDENTIFIERS	*Pastoral Counseling; Philippines

ABSTRACT

This paper argues that the individual and personalized approach of pastoral care in schools demands the total involvement of school administration, personnel, curriculum, and programs. Pastoral care is delivered through the various opportunities for contact between the teacher and student on a more informal basis and is in a non-academic setting. Group work is the main focus. It involves open communication, educational and career guidance, and parental involvement in their children's education. The paper describes the aims of pastoral care in the Assumption context, which includes a building stage, development of self-discipline, encouragement phase, and helping with academic and interrelationship problems. Pastoral care is delivered through campus ministry, student counseling services, and the academic curriculum. It states that this comprehensive approach will assist in the learning process, serve the goals of achieving academic excellence of an all-rounded kind, and respect the gradual development and growth of young people. (JDM)

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Pastoral Care in Assumption College: Its Concept and Practice

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Biographical Information:

Dr. Conchita Venturina - Umali is presently the Dean of Academic Affairs of Assumption College. She is concurrently the Dean of the Graduate School. Formerly, she was the Guidance Director and Chairperson of the Behavioral Science Department and Dean of Liberal Arts in the same institution. She was the Guidance director of Adamson University before she joined Assumption College, Makati City, Philippines.

Dr. Umali is the past president of the Philippines Guidance and Personnel Association. At present, she is the PRO and contact person of IOTA PHI, a chapter of Chi Sigma Iota Counseling Honors Society. She is also a Board member of the Psychological Association of the Philippines and Career Development Association of the Philippines.

Assumption College aims to develop world class Filipino Catholic Women Professionals. As such all efforts are geared toward the attainment of that mission.

Mere Mane Eugenic Milleret, foundress of the Religious of the Assumption defined education as a process of human formation for social transformation. For her, to educate is to set a person free, to educate is to transform the world. Man, is viewed as someone who is in the process of becoming. Caring is an essential aspect of education. Mere Marie Eugenie emphasized in her educational pedagogy the need to Christianize the intelligence and form character. The educator is expected to be a role model. It is through her "being" that she becomes effective in her "doing". As a policy, the curriculum, the co- and extra curriculars and guidance program are expected to bring out the best in every student so that she can become an effective agent of change within her sphere of influence. The person is the most important factor in the teaching and learning process. Character is formed in the light of Gospel values.

What is Pastoral Care?

Pastoral Care is British in origins having its etymological roots in Christianity. It is something that encompasses all aspects of an individual's education other than the direct imparting of knowledge (Marland, 1974). From the perspective of the care giver, Best, Jaivis and Ribbins (1980) agree that Pastoral Care refers to the non-instructional aspects of the roles of teachers and others in schools. It includes guidance and counseling as specific aspects of pastoral care.

Hamblin (1978) described it as part of a teaching process which focuses not only on the intellectual, but social and emotional development of each child and may involve altering the learning environment to suit the needs of each student so that she can develop to his/her maximum potential. From a wider perspective, pastoral care is considered as an attempt by schools to be involved in the total. continuous development of a child,

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especially one who is most in need of extra care and effort (David & Cowley, 1980). This is the remedial aspect of Pastoral Care. Lang (1987) defines pastoral care as a development function which seeks to create a safe, secure environment in which one feels free to develop one's strengths while having courage enough to recognize his particular weaknesses and take action to cope with them.

In general, pastoral care is an institutionalized system of personalized education aimed at meeting the affective needs of students.

Pastoral care Is delivered through the various opportunities for contact between the teacher and student on a more informal basis and is in a non-academic setting. Group work is the main format. Inherent learning takes place with the sharing of ideas and experiences. Comraderie, acceptance of others as well as self-awareness and a sense of self-worth are promoted during group interaction.

1. Open communication in a non-threatening and friendly environment is an essential theme of pastoral care. Teacher's get to know each of their students personally, so as to facilitate a close monitoring of student progress and a regular assessment of student needs. Adult-adult relationship promoting a sense of responsibility and self-awareness in the students is encouraged.

2. Educational and Career Guidance

Students are helped In academic as well as career choices. Department chairpersons and coordinators take care of the academics while career choice is facilitated by the guidance counselors and class advisers.

3. Parental Involvement in School Activities

Home - school liaison is encouraged and maintained. Parents are involved through regular parent-teacher meetings, collaborative parent-student-teacher activities, sharing of parental expertise as well as participation in parent education courses. Regular, frequent reports of the student progress and needs are communicated to parents with helpful recommendations. Communication between parents and teachers regarding their child's development is encouraged and maintained.

Assumption College in all its programs. emphasizes the need to reflect the uniqueness of the student population it serves, thus each school program of pastoral care is essentially unique to the expressed needs of the student population.

<u>Aims of Pastoral care: The Assumption Context</u>

1. build

1.1 positive self-concept of students by emphasizing positive attitudes

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1.2 an effective classroom environment by creating a "safe environment" where students fee! at ease to participate fully in the lessons

2. develop self-discipline by inculcating good habits, a sense of social responsibility and respect for others

3. encourage

3.1 academic progress for all learners by detecting difficulties that may be interfering with the learning process and consequently helping them cope with the academic problems

3.2 self-awareness by providing opportunities to explore their interests and abilities; express their creativity; explore their feeling, etc.

3.3 career exploration

3.4 effective peer relationships and build good rapport with students and their parents

4. help students

4.1 deal more effectively with problems of daily living (the relationships with parents, friends and teachers)

4.2 inculcate basic study habits and healthy attitudes in the pursuit of academic excellence

<u>Deliver of Pastoral Care</u>

Pastoral Care is delivered through the following:

A. PERFORM and d Campus Ministry / Theology

Curriculum (learning of personal and social skills)

a.1 formal sessions in class

a.2 Informal class (co- and extra curricular activities)

B. Student Counseling

The main focus Is on the individual student, his/her achievement and development

C. Academic Curriculum

teacher care permeates the academic curriculum in order for pastoral care to be effective

Opportunities for Personal Growth

1. building up self-esteem and self acceptance through the activities outside the formal classroom setting (extra-curriculars allow students to express talents and strengths in his own area self of competence)

2. turning talent toward service: the natural talents of each student are channeled towards the building up of the school community

Through the extra curricular activities, students can use their gifts for the community first and only in the process of serving the common good may they enjoy the rewards. They provide the students with opportunities to experience the satisfaction and sense of fulfillment that comes from enriching the lives of others.

3. developing a critical awareness: Extra curricular activities are excellent ways of developing an attitude of responsibility and accountability for their human choices and actions.

Pastoral care takes place within the extra-curricular activities through the Student Council, sports, games, clubs and societies, discipline, service groups and excursions, field trips, exposures and immersions.

B. Student Counseling is a one to one contact between a teacher and a student. It also takes on a more developmental aspect of guiding a student in decision-making and personal-social development on an individual basis. Teachers may refer students with adjustment problems for professions counseling.

C. Academic Curriculum

Every teacher in his / her subject area, must pay close attention to the needs of the students and to interact with them both on a formal and informal level. Teachers however, need to be trained to be creative in meeting personal and social education objective in their academics, classwork whatever their subject may be.

IN SERVICE TRAINING FOR THE PASTORAL ASPECT OF THE TEACHER'S ROLE

Teachers have intended the areas of in-service training in order to be effective in their role as frontline care givers in the school. Among the skills are:

1. group work approaches

2. Student-centered teaching methods

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3. basic active listening and counseling skills

4. team leadership skills

5. need assessment skills

6. individual student profiling skills

7. concepts and skills of career guidance

8. care-giving skills

CONCLUSION

This individual and personalized approach towards pastoral care in school demands the total involvement of school administration, personnel, curriculum and programs. This comprehensive approach will definitely assist in the learning process, serve the goal of achieving academic excellence of an all-rounded kind and respect the gradual development and growth of young people.